

# WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SKY

რას ვხედავთ, როდესაც ცას ვუყურებთ?

A film by Alexandre Koberidze



150 min/Germany/Georgia/Georgian with English subtitles/2021/Cert U

World Premiere and Winner of the FIPRESCI Prize – Berlin International Film Festival

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**FOR ALL UK PRESS ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:**

Sue Porter/Lizzie Frith – Porter Frith Ltd

Tel. 07940 584066/07825 603705 [porterfrith@hotmail.com](mailto:porterfrith@hotmail.com)

**FOR ALL OTHER ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT**

Robert Beeson – [robert@newwavefilms.co.uk](mailto:robert@newwavefilms.co.uk)

Dena Blakeman – [dena@newwavefilms.co.uk](mailto:dena@newwavefilms.co.uk)



[info@newwavefilms.co.uk](mailto:info@newwavefilms.co.uk)

## Synopsis

It's love at first sight when Lisa and Giorgi meet by chance on a street in the Georgian city of Kutaisi. Love strikes them so suddenly that they even forget to ask each other's names. Before continuing on their way, they agree to meet the next day. Little do they know that an evil eye casts its spell on them. Will they manage to meet again? And if they do, will they know who they are? Life goes on as usual in their hometown, street dogs stray, the soccer world cup begins and a film crew on its quest to find true love might be exactly what they need.



Further information and downloads: [here](#)

Photo set download: [here](#)

## Cast

Giorgi  
Lisa  
Lisa  
Giorgi  
Café Owner

**Giorgi Bochorishvili**  
**Ani Karseladze**  
**Oliko Barbakadze**  
**Giorgi Ambroladze**  
**Vakhtang Fanchulidze**

## Crew

Director/Writer  
Director of Photography  
Editor  
Music and Sound  
Production Design  
Costume Design  
Commissioning Editor  
Co-Producers

**Alexandre Koberidze**  
**Faraz Fesharaki**  
**Alexandre Koberidze**  
**Giorgi Koberidze**  
**Maka Jebirashvili**  
**Nino Zautashvili**  
**Verena Veihl**  
**Anna Dziapshipa**  
**Ketevan Kipiani**  
**Luise Hauschild**  
**Maka Jebirashvili**  
**Mariam Shatberashvili**  
**German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB)**  
**New Matter Films (Germany)**  
**Sakdoc Film (Georgia)**  
**Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg**  
**Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg (MBB)**  
**Georgian National Film Centre**

Producer  
Production  
Coroduction

Supported by

**150 min/Germany/Georgia 2021**  
**1:1.66 / 5.1**  
**Georgian with English subtitles/Cert U**

## ALEXANDRE KOBERIDZE:

After studying microeconomy and film production in Tbilisi, Alexandre Koberidze moved to Berlin and studied directing at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB). During his studies, he directed several successful short films, starting with his short Colophon (2015) that gained critical plaudits at the Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen. His first feature "Let the summer never come again" (2017) won multiple awards at many festivals worldwide, including the Grand Prix at FID Marseille.



## Filmography:

### FEATURES:

2021:	WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SKY
2017	LET THE SUMMER NEVER COME AGAIN

### SHORTS:

2018	LINGER ON SOME PALE BLUE DOT
2017	THE PERFECT SPECTATOR
2015	COLOPHON
2014	LOOKING BACK IS GRACE



## Director's Statement

It is strange to write about the film I made, it is strange because there are too many things I want to write about. I could write about the reason our film starts with an image of kids leaving school. I could voice my retrospective regrets that I did not start the film as it was in the script – with an image of a step. I could talk about why we shot some part of the film on 16mm and some of it digitally, or why the kids order 11 ice cream cones and not 12 as Bondo Dolaberidze does in the film that this scene refers to.

I could write endlessly about my actors, about Giorgi Bochorishvili who I grew up with and who is always the first on my mind when I think about the cast; about Ani Karseladze who was born to stand in front a camera; about Oliko Barbakadze who doesn't get much screen time, but whose every second makes me happy that I made this film; about Giorgi Ambroldze who left after his few days of shooting and became the European arm wrestling champion, about Vakhtang Panchulidze who has been a star of Georgian Cinema since the 70s and who I was lucky to work with.



I could write more about why I gave my parents the parts of the cameraman and the director in the film. I could point out the similarities between football and cinema, two games I love to play. I could write about the gesture Leo Messi makes every time he scores a goal, what it means for me and what impact this gesture had on this film. I could tell you that I had the time of my life working on the music with my brother Giorgi, and how this music changed the film. I could recall the time I spent with our producer Mariam Shatberashvili and cameraman Faraz Fesharaki in Kutaisi and how in the end I wanted to write about Kutaisi, but as one writer wrote – who am I to write about Kutaisi?

Honestly, I wanted to write about all of this and much more. At some point I realized that if I went ahead, the resulting text would be at least as long as the script of the film. How should I choose what things to write about and what things to leave out, thus giving more meaning to some things and less to others, which is the last thing I want to do? I think if this film makes sense, it is by means of talking about all the things above and many more together, not in separation. But as I had to write something, I wrote a small poem. Here it is:

Me and you  
When I open my eyes, I see you.  
When I close my eyes, I see you.  
One may say I am blind, but I am not.  
I see you, I see you, I see you...





## Interview with Alexandre Koberidze

**Your film sets up a love story and then keeps up the suspense of whether it will ever come to pass. How did you come up with the idea of a curse and of missed connections?**

When I was a child, I often had to wear a jet stone, usually on my hand, to protect me from the evil eye. Today, almost nobody is doing this anymore – but I would like to know why. Doesn't the evil eye exist anymore or is it simply that nobody believes in it? Of course, my story is not only about the evil eye but also generally about forces – good and bad – that seem to have been locked out of our materialist world but now and then still show themselves. I am interested in the respect for the inexplicable and the place such phenomena have in everyday life. The attraction of two people to one another is such an inexplicable thing. How is the thread strung that ties two people together, and why is it so painful when this thread breaks? Nobody really knows. The metamorphosis in the film to me is not so much an allegory or a metaphor, but something that happens in front of our eyes – everything else is a matter of interpretation.



**Children, dogs and football play a big part in the film. Can you explain how you decided to introduce these elements to the story?**

Somehow, Kutaisi is a city that belongs to its children, or at least there are certain times during the day when one gets that feeling. It is a little like the sequence in Nanni Moretti's "Dear Diary" in which the children have taken over the town. Since we were very much driven by what the city had to offer, it quickly became clear that children would play a big role – and anyway, is there anything more beautiful than to film children? Perhaps dogs! In such desolate times as ours, the exemplary existence of dogs with their dedication, honour and dignity is a real consolation to me whoever our paths cross. And in my films, I always try to give them some space in gratitude. There are a few things that give me joy,

and one of them definitely is football. When we were location scouting, we went to a real stadium and came through the tunnel onto the pitch, just like the players do. And in that moment, I finally understood that this would be my biggest dream: running onto the football field in a spanking new jersey, standing in the line with the rest of the team, beaming with pride, listening to the Champion's League theme jingle or the national anthem while preparing for the big match. Not going to happen, I know, but in the films I make I can get a little closer to this dream...

**The title as well as the film's conceit evokes a certain sense of magical realism, of the supernatural affecting everyday lives without anybody being surprised. Would you say that is a typical Georgian trope? Why this stylistic choice?**

There are two possibilities: either the characters in the film do, in fact, wonder what is going on, but we never happen to see them when they do, or they wonder but don't let on that they do. On one hand, it is important to me to leave people alone in crucial, intimate moments. There are things you must do and experience alone, and that is true for fictive characters as well. On the other hand, the range of human emotional reactions is completely overrated, and the reactions we see in the movies have nothing to do with reality. I don't necessarily think that reactions have to be realistic, but I would prefer them not to follow the templates we are used to see in films.



**Talk to us about the music – it adds a charming and amusing tone to the film: what motivated your choice of music? And why the huge range between the main synthesizer themes, Georgian traditional chant and Gianna Nannini?**

I am often nostalgic for the time of silent movies.

That genre was completely swallowed by the talkies, as if one would disturb the other or as if it was impossible for both forms to exist in parallel. I often try to make a kind of silent film, not literally, but in essence. Music always accompanied silent films, and I try to stay true to the genre. The music for the film was written by my brother Giorgi Koberidze. He brought in the variety. It was a long collaboration, and we were inspired by a range of



sources, from Tom and Jerry, where the music is directly derived from the movements of the protagonists to the big soundtracks where the music is huge, like an opera. Giorgi composed many very different tunes that often break with expectations. That is important because you always need a counter point. Nannini's Notti Magiche was the official song of the 1990 World Championship in Italy. I was only six at the time, but the song has stuck in my memory as a hymn to passion.

Filmmaking plays a very important part in the story of "What do we see when we look at the sky?"... It's depicted as a long and painful process, sometimes the film goes bad, but when it works, it reveals truths that people didn't see before. What is your take on the relationship of film to lived reality, and on its role in the audience's lives?

A few years ago, I was in Finland for a few days over New Year's Eve. I had the very strange feeling of being uncertain whether things were as I saw them, and Aki Kaurismäki just shows them as they are or whether things were as they were because Aki Kaurismäki had shown them that way. Cinema has a huge power to influence the way we see things, and it creates behavioural patterns that then become part of our daily repertoire. To give an example, I am convinced that the way we kiss today is derived from the movies. I am sure one could do some interesting empirical research on that. And isn't it exciting to know who is responsible for the most beautiful moments in our lives?

